here's how much money you can get and here's what you can do with it.''

But still, once these young people get to college, if they come from backgrounds where there is almost no record of achievement in the areas you represent, they need mentors. They need people who can guide them through all these decisions that have to be made about what you're going to major in and what else you take. I'm becoming an expert in that. [*Laughter*] They need people who can guide them into the right kinds of graduate programs. They need people who can support them through graduate work and help them to find a successful career.

Now, when we started these awards in 1996, we did it to encourage more scientists, engineers, and mathematicians to become mentors, and to encourage more minorities, women, and young people with disabilities to seek careers in science and math and technological fields. Today I want to announce a new step in this area. The Federal Government supports the work, literally, of tens of thousands of scientists and engineers at national labs and universities all across the country. If it were up to George and me, we'd support the work of many more. But these are tens of thousands of potential mentors working for our country through your tax dollar investments.

Today I'm directing the National Science and Technology Council to report back to me in 6 months with comprehensive recommendations about how we can use this fabulous resource to generate more mentors, to touch more kids, in a way that will have a huge positive impact on this problem we're trying to attack.

If every scientist and engineer who is doing something as a direct result of Federal investment were to become a committed, dedicated mentor, think what it would mean: A teenager from rural Tennessee reaching for the stars as a NASA technician; an inner-city child joining a clinical team that discovers a cure for cancer at the nearest teaching hospital; a first-generation American helping to build the next generation of the Internet.

Henry Adams once said that teachers affect eternity because they can never tell where their influence stops. I believe the same can be said about mentors. And I thank you, each and every one of you, for what you have done to help our country reach its full potential.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 1:52 p.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House.

Memorandum on Diversity in the Scientific and Technical Work Force

September 10, 1998

Memorandum for the National Science and Technology Council

Subject: Achieving Greater Diversity Throughout the U.S. Scientific and Technical Work Force

The world admires the American higher education system for its excellence in advanced training in science and engineering. Maintaining leadership across the frontiers of science and producing the finest scientists and engineers for the 21st century are principal goals of my Administration's science and technology policies. The work of individuals and organizations to inspire and mentor young people and offer role models is crucial to achieving these goals. To recognize this, I established the Presidential Award for Excellence in Science, Mathematics, and Engineering Mentoring in 1996. This annual award honors individuals and organizations for outstanding mentoring efforts that have encouraged significant numbers of individuals from groups under-represented in science, mathematics, and engineering to succeed in these fields.

As we work to develop the finest scientists and engineers for the 21st century, our human resources policies must address the composition of our science and engineering work force. Achieving diversity throughout the ranks of the scientific and technical work force presents a formidable challenge. The number of women, minorities, and persons with disabilities who have careers in science and engineering remains low. In every year of this decade, there have been far too few minorities awarded degrees in science or engineering, and the trend in minority admissions and degree awards is not encouraging.

We need to draw upon the Nation's full talent pool. We cannot afford to overlook anyone.

Today, the science and engineering work force does not reflect the changing face of America. By 2010, approximately half of America's school-age population will be from minority groups. Minority participation in science and engineering careers should keep pace with this growing diversity. Expanding such participation will require drawing on and developing talent at all stages of educational preparation leading to advanced study. For example, only a small fraction, perhaps one-eighth, of all high school graduates have the mathematics and science preparation that would permit advanced study in a technical field; for under-represented minorities, that fraction is only half as much.

The Federal Government, working in partnership with the private sector and State governments, can be an effective agent of change; we can promote fuller participation of women, minorities, and people with disabilities in scientific and technical careers. With your help, my Administration has promoted quality education in the crucial early years by improving the quality of our schools and teachers, expanding access to the Internet and other technology-based learning tools, and basing all our efforts on rigorous standards through Goals 2000. We have expanded access to higher education by making it more affordable.

Existing Federal programs provide the means to achieve, but what are also needed in many cases are the mentors or role models that can help point the way to success. My High Hopes initiative will provide mentoring for middle and high school students to encourage larger numbers of low-income young people to enroll in colleges and universities. However, we must continue to assist under-represented minorities as they make their way through the myriad options available to them once they enter into our Nation's system of higher education. This is especially true for important technical career paths.

Therefore, I direct the National Science and Technology Council (NSTC) to develop recommendations within 180 days on how to achieve greater diversity throughout our scientific and technical work force. The NSTC recommendations will detail ways for the Federal Government to bolster mentoring in science and technology fields and to work with the private sector and academia to strengthen mentoring in higher education.

William J. Clinton

Statement on Senate Inaction on Campaign Finance Reform

September 10, 1998

I am very disappointed that a minority of the Senate, led by the Republican leadership, has once again voted to preserve the status quo of campaign finance by blocking tough bipartisan campaign finance reform. This comprehensive legislation has been passed by the House, is supported by the majority of the Senate, and is demanded by the American people.

If this minority of Senators continue to block this bill, they must take responsibility for the current campaign finance system, with its soft money and its inadequate disclosure requirements. And by doing so, they would deny the American people the best opportunity in a generation to pass meaningful, bipartisan campaign finance reform.

In the days to come, I urge the Senate to consider this issue again and give the American people the kind of campaign finance law they deserve.

Proclamation 7119—Minority Enterprise Development Week, 1998

September 10, 1998

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

America's free enterprise system has always been a path to inclusion and empowerment. Under this system, generations of Americans have built good lives for themselves and their families—rising as high as their skills, effort, and determination can take them. But for minority entrepreneurs, the path has not always been free of obstacles. Sometimes held back by economic, social,